

UNCLASSIFIED

Department of State

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

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PAGE 01
ACTION ARA-14

BUENOS 02432 312129Z

5999

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 SY-05 MCT-01 DEAE-00 CIAE-00
INR-10 IO-13 JUSE-00 NSAE-00 CTME-00 SNM-05
TRSE-00 USIA-06 NSC-05 OES-07 OMB-01 L-03 H-01
/077 W

-----067316 312131Z /46

P 312112Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5169

BUENOS AIRES 2432

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, AR, SHUM
SUBJECT: VILLA DEVOTO RIOT

1. THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT'S DETAILED PUBLIC EXPLANATIONS OF THE SUPPRESSION OF THE VILLA DEVOTO RIOT HAVE APPARENTLY ANSWERED THE MANY QUESTIONS RAISED EARLIER. THE MAJOR FOCUS OF CONCERN HERE HAS BEEN WHETHER THE PERSONS KILLED IN THE RIOT HAD BEEN SHOT OR WHETHER THEY DIED FROM BURNS OF ASPHYXIATION.

2. NO ONE HERE HAS QUESTIONED THAT THE PRISONERS INVOLVED IN THE RIOT WERE COMMON CRIMINALS. DEA AND EMBASSY CONTACTS RECOGNIZE THE NAMES OF A NUMBER OF THE PRISONERS AS PERSONS INVOLVED WITH DRUGS. AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE POLITICAL PRISONERS IN MAJOR ARGENTINE PENAL FACILITIES ARE STRICTLY SEPARATED FROM COMMON CRIMINALS AND FACE A MORE SEVERE PENAL REGIME.

3. DEA/BUENOS AIRES IS FOLLOWING UP ON UNVERIFIED INFORMATION THAT TWO MAJOR NARCOTIC TRAFFICKERS ESCAPED DURING THE RIOTS.

4. EMBASSY COMMENT: ALTHOUGH WE ARE NOT PREPARED TO ACCEPT AT FACE VALUE THE GOVERNMENT'S CLAIM THAT NONE OF THE PRISONERS KILLED IN THE RIOTS DIED AS OF A RESULT OF GUNSHOT WOUNDS, IT IS CLEAR THAT PERSONS INVOLVED WERE COMMON CRIMINALS AND NOT POLITICAL DETAINEES. WE WILL CHECK NEXT WEEK WITH LOCAL ICRC REP CONCERNING COMA'S ALLEGATIONS ABOUT A REJECTED OFFER TO PERFORM AN INDEPENDENT AUTOPSY ON THE DEAD PRISONERS.
CASTRO

PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

☒ Release ☐ Excise ☐ Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify ☐ In Part ☒ In Full

☐ Classify as ☐ Extend as ☐ Downgrade to

Date Declassify on Reason

Lot 81D208
Box4963 (2/12)

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